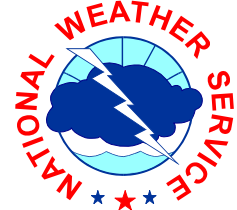




**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
WESTERN REGION
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH**



APRIL 22, 2003

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

NOAA Administrator Award to Dennis Hull. I'm proud to announce that Pendleton WCM Dennis Hull has been selected to receive one of the 2003 NOAA Administrator's Awards. As one of the 21 NWS recipients, Dennis will receive his award in the Information Systems category at the May 6 event in Silver Spring. He will be recognized for his efforts in public service and the implementation of the expansion of five new NOAA Weather Radio information systems in southeast Washington and northeast Oregon in a very short time frame.

Between late summer and early fall 2002, Dennis completed a multi-year project of developing plans, gaining several cooperator partners, obtaining funding, and working toward installation of the systems. He successfully obtained the necessary equipment, facilities, and maintenance through a variety of means and worked tirelessly to secure donations and funding from the State of Washington and the USDA Rural Utilities Service. The new NWR systems bring this critical NWS service to more than 60,000 additional people in eight counties and increases the overall service coverage area for Pendleton (total population of more than 830,000 people) from 86 to 93 percent. Congratulations, Dennis!



John Pulasky (center) was notified of his selection by Billings MIC Keith Meier (left) and WCM Jim Scarlett (right).

Environmental Hero Nominated by Montana Weather Forecast Offices. John Pulasky, a veteran radio broadcaster from Billings, Montana, was hailed as one of the nation's 2003 NOAA Environmental Heroes when representatives of the NWS surprised him on April 14 with the announcement. During his regular appearance on the Montana Ag Network's "Berg in the Morning" show, John was notified of his selection by WFO Billings MIC Keith Meier and WCM Jim Scarlett. Meier told Pulasky that the forecast offices in Great Falls, Billings, Missoula, and Glasgow nominated him because of his support for many NWS programs in the state. The surprise continued when Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and

NOAA Administrator, retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., called Pulasky from Washington, D.C., to congratulate him for being named one of 36 NOAA winners this year. The Montana meteorologists also used the "Berg in the Morning"

radio program to launch their annual statewide spring and summer weather safety campaign last week, which was very successful.

National Volunteer Week. National Volunteer Week will be celebrated April 27 - May 3, 2003. I encourage all Western Region staff to join me in showing appreciation to our Cooperative Weather Observers, volunteer weather spotters, and Ham radio operators who help us carry out our important mission every day. It takes many individuals working together to prepare and disseminate daily weather forecasts and record the nation's climate patterns.

This year's national volunteer week theme is "Celebrate Volunteers - The Spirit of America!", and it lends itself perfectly to the American tradition of neighbor helping neighbor when it comes to the weather monitoring and predicting. Approximately one-seventh of our national economy, about one trillion dollars a year, is weather sensitive, and the volunteer weather observers are many of our unsung heroes who help us and their fellow citizens every day.

Nationally, we have more than 11,700 COOP members, more than 211,000 volunteer weather spotters, and thousands of Ham radio operators who help us provide the best climate and weather services to our nation. Join me in extending our deepest appreciation to them for their assistance... next week and each time you work with them.

DEPUTY REGIONAL DIRECTOR



HIC Dave Brandon, CBRFC, briefs
Kwon-Su Kang, Korean Water
Resources Corporation

Korean Water Resources Corporation Visits the CBRFC. On April 14, Kwon-Su Kang, the Assistant Manager of Korean Water Resources Corporation, visited the Colorado Basin River Forecast Center. The Korean Water Resources Corporation is a quasi-governmental agency in Korea with a mission to integrate water resources operations to maximize benefits while satisfying the various and often conflicting demands of users. The main purpose of the visit was to gain first hand knowledge of the use and application of Ensemble Streamflow Prediction (ESP) in an operational environment. Discussions focused on methodologies of 'weighting' historical precipitation, temperature and streamflow, including analog years and ENSO signals.

International Boating and Water Safety Summit. On April 14-16, WFO Las Vegas participated in the International Boating and Water Safety Summit. The summit is co-sponsored by the National Safe Boating Council and the National Water Safety Congress. Participants include both government and private sector (e.g., Coast Guard

officials, marina and waterway managers, safe boating agencies, life guard groups, etc.), primarily from North America and western Europe. Topics address a wide range of interests from small business (e.g., rafting outfitters, water recreation organizations, powerboat companies, etc.) to major policy-makers (e.g., coastal rescue operations, risk management boards, and law enforcement agencies).



WFO Tucson General Forecaster Gary Zell promotes NOAA's NWS at the PCC Career Fair.

WFO Tuscon at Career Fair. Staff from WFO Tucson participated in a career fair sponsored by Pima Community College (PCC) on April 2. This semiannual event draws more than 5000 individuals and offers employment opportunities for government and private businesses. The career fair is held at the Tucson Community Center and draws students from PCC as well as the University of Arizona and the general public.

WFO Tucson General Forecaster Gary Zell and WCM Tom Evans had over 400 people stop by their booth to gather information on job opportunities in the NWS and NOAA.

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

Public Weather Services Meeting. Craig Schmidt represented Western Region at a Public Weather Services meeting last week in Chicago. A number of policy issues affecting WR were discussed regarding the yearly updates to public weather Instructions. Some of the highlights include:

- C WR will still be able to issue outlooks for winter weather and non-precipitation events via the Special Weather Statement (SPS) for another year.
- C We still need to issue routine Hazardous Weather Outlooks (HWO), as the routine HWO has enjoyed success with plenty of local Emergency Manager in other parts of the country.
- C Local Storm Reports (LSR) will be able to include reports of events below warning criteria.
- C Short Term Forecasts (NOW) will no longer be limited to eight lines of text. We should still keep them concise, rarely exceeding 10 lines.
- C Wind Chill products will fall under the WSW product category instead of NPW.
- C VTEC, if and when it is implemented, will include Upgrade and Downgrade action categories for WSW/NPW products. Previously, VTEC "canceled" one product and issued the other.

These items will not go into effect until the updated Instructions are implemented this fall.

Also, a discussion was held regarding the impact of winter storms on the public and how timing has as much of an impact as the amount of snow in many cases (i.e., lots of snow overnight on a weekend may not be as significant as moderate snow at rush hour). OCWWS and the regions will take a look at adding some type of impact statement to winter storm/heavy snow warnings to account for the societal impacts of different winter storms.

New Radar Products. There are many new Radar products in the new ORPG Build 3. Both ORPG Build 3 and the new AWIPS OB1, which is required to view the new products, have been distributed for installation at all WR WFOs. The following is a brief description the new Radar products available. For the complete details on these new products, view the Warning Decision Training Branch's (WDTB) webpage at <http://www.wdtb.noaa.gov/resources/projects/RPG3/index.html>, and click on "preview document" for complete details on ORPG changes that affect operations.

The new products available are: a new Hodograph Product that will be computed from VAD wind profiled data, a User Selectable Layer Reflectivity Maximum where users will be able to customize the top and bottom selection of a layer, and a new blockage algorithm to accommodate new VCPs that will be available in future ORPG and AWIPS builds.

Another new product that is available in AWIPS OB1, but is not a part of the ORPG Build 3 is the High Resolution (8 bit) SRM Product. This product is generated by AWIPS and is designed to be used in conjunction with the 16 bit SRM product not as a replacement. For more information, check out ERH webpage at: http://www.werh.noaa.gov/ssd/awips/8-bit_radar.html#srm. FSL also has a webpage with additional information about the 8 bit SRM Product at: <http://www-sdd.fsl.noaa.gov/~ramer/noaa/srmUIWG/srmUIWG.html>.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

SOO/DOH Workshop. SSD is looking forward to the SOO DOH Workshop on May 6-8 at the Hilton Hotel in Salt Lake City. Final stages of the planning, with break out sessions, are being organized to facilitate this program. We anticipate a good turn-out for the workshop, and we want to remind those who are attending to make sure you have called for your reservations. If you have any questions or concerns, please call Becky Hammond or Andy Edman at (801) 524-5131.

Seventh Annual Great Divide Workshop. NOAA's National Weather Service Office in Glasgow, Montana, will host the Seventh Annual Great Divide Workshop on August 26-28, 2003. The workshop will begin at 1:00 p.m. on August 26 and conclude at about 11:00 a.m. on August 28, allowing for travel Tuesday morning, August 26, and Thursday afternoon, August 28. This year's workshop will be held at the Cottonwood Inn (1-800-321-8213). A block of rooms are being held for the workshop under the National Weather Service. Registration will be available before April 1. All participants will be asked to provide a presentation topic before June 1. Abstracts will be taken through

August 1 and can be e-mailed to Thomas.Salem@noaa.gov. For more information contact NWS at (406) 228-4042.

SYSTEMS OPERATIONS DIVISION

AlertGaurd. NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) on TVs Thomson RCA will be offering AlertGaurd on high end television starting sometime in early 2004. AlertGuard incorporates NWR Specific Area Message Encoding receiver (SAME) in the television (separate from the TV receiver). Thomson RCA has done a great job of designing AlertGuard to let the homeowner set up the receiver for advisories, watches, and warnings or monitor NWR. The receiver works whether the TV is off or on. While on, viewers watching any cable station, DVD, or VCR will receive advisories, watches, or warnings. The NWS has a special studies agreement with Thomson RCA which will permit evaluation of the equipment. Thomson will bear cost of shipping to and from test locations. The primary purpose of this effort is to evaluate the performance of the AlertGuard to determine how well it reacts to an NWR SAME broadcast from a station or stations that can be received at the test location. This requires monitoring TV set performance when an advisory, watch, or warning is issued and noting how the set reacts to the received NWR signal. The NWS expects the TV sets to be available in late April and remain in place for 2 to 3 weeks, assuring at least 2 weekly tests. To make the tests uniform, each station selected for the test would have to be properly aligned and the alignment periodically monitored during the test period. Regional headquarters offices and between 1 and 5 WFOs in each Region will be selected to test the set. Selected candidates for the evaluation test for the Western Region are: WRH, Monterey, Oxnard, Flagstaff, Phoenix, and Great Falls.

NWR Narrowband UHF Links Installed. Four NOAA Weather Radio narrowband UHF links were installed at the Salt Lake City Weather Forecast Office on April 17, 2003. The work was completed by the WFO ET shop and Joe Lachacz.

AWIPS Status. Twenty-two of 28 Western Region sites (including 3 RFCs and WRH) have installed the new AWIPS Pre-processors (PXs). Nineteen sites have installed Operational Build 1 (OB1).

AWIPS Operational Build 1.1 Tested. AWIPS Maintenance Release OB 1.1 has been successfully field tested at a few offices nationwide. Our thanks to WFO Reno for participating in the test for Western Region. The installation takes about 2 hours and corrects about two dozen Direct Reports (DRs). We will provide a date for field implementation as soon as we get one.

Safety & Environmental Issues. In the year 2000, the WR updated Spill Prevention, Control & Countermeasure Plans (SPCC) for all WR stations. This was accomplished in accordance with EPA regulations, which required that the plans be reviewed and updated every 3 years. In August of 2002, changes were adopted to the regulations. These changes have a significant impact on several of the NWS plans. One of the new rules require that the SPCC plans be reviewed and updated every 5 years.

In addition to the EPA regulation changes, the NWS is in the final phase of publishing a new Environmental Compliance Manual, (NWSM) 50-1116. This manual establishes

NWS policy for environmental compliance. The new regulations liberalize the requirements for formal SPCC plans and, at the same time, the NWSM 50-1116 establishes a requirement to have either an SPCC Plan or a Best Management Plan (BMP) for the management of diesel fuel stored at NWS sites. The BMP is a liberalized version of the SPCC plans.

Our goal is for the Systems Operation Division to evaluate all sites and to determine which sites will require a full SPCC plan and which sites can be converted to a BMP. We have started this process and are working with the Regional Environmental Compliance Officer (RECO) at WASC to insure that there is agreement in the interpretation of the requirements at each site. We anticipate that all sites which have the storage capacity of less than 1320 gallons will be converted to a BMP. There are also several sites, which have storage capacity of more than 1320 gallons, which we hope to convert to BMPs because of their remote locations away from navigable waters.

Rich Anderson will prepare the new SPCC or the new BMP plans for each station. SODs goal is to have all of these new plans completed and distributed by the end of the current calendar year.

Facilities Projects. Lee Jenson visited Pendleton, Spokane, and Portland to test/inspect UPS batteries at the WFOs and RDAs. New batteries were installed at the Spokane RDA. At Pendleton, 8 RDA batteries were replaced, with full replacements at the WFO and RDA to be planned within the next 6 months. At Portland, 3 batteries were changed at the RDA.

Tom Page and Jim Maclellan completed installation of an air conditioner to cool the space where the ACU is located at the airport, Catalina Island, CA. They also mounted the NWR cabinet, standby generator and fuel tank/lines for the new NWR on Catalina, Island.

Radioisotoped Observation Instrumentation System (RSOIS) towers have been ordered for Salem, Elko, Glasgow, Great Falls, Miramar, and Salt Lake.

Contracts have been awarded for the following facilities related work:

- Painting of the upper air dome at Oakland, CA
- Painting of the upper air dome at Boise, ID.
- Paint/wall covering of the hallways at Elko, NV
- Fencing for new instrument site on Catalina Island, CA
- IAQ survey for Oxnard, CA